WRITTEN REPLY

To the Examiner of the Patent Office: Takeshi OAGAWA

1. International Application No.
PCT/JP2005/002295

2. Applicant

Name	MATSUSHITA ELECTRIC INDUSTRIAL CO., LTD.
Address	1006, Oaza Kadoma, Kadoma-shi, Osaka 571-8501 JAPAN
Nationality	JAPAN
Residence	JAPAN

3. Agent

Name	IKEUCHI SATO & PARTNER PATENT ATTORNEYS
Address	26th Floor, OAP TOWER, 8-30, Tenmabashi 1-chome, Kita-ku, Osaka-shi, Osaka 530-6026 Japan

4. Date of Notice 24. 5. 2005 (Mailing date)

5. Contents of Reply

(1) It was determined that the inventions defined by claims 5, 6, and 8 lack novelty and inventiveness over JP 2002-270210 A (hereinafter, referred to as "Document 1").

(2) FIG. 2 of Document 1 shows a fuel cartridge L having two partition walls H and J. As shown in FIG. 1, by piercing the partition walls H and J with one tube B provided at a fuel cell, a liquid fuel in a fuel chamber F of the fuel cartridge L is supplied to the fuel cell through the tube B.

(3) Regarding claims 5 and 6

In the fuel cartridge of the invention defined by claim 5 of the present

application, a fuel supply port protecting mechanism provided at a fuel supply port includes at least a first valve and a second valve provided on a fuel passage. Furthermore, "at a case of the fuel cartridge, a first opening is provided between the first valve and an outside, and a second opening is provided between the second valve and the outside, and an opening operation of the first valve is performed via the first opening, and an opening operation of the second valve is performed via the second opening". More specifically, in order to take out a fuel through the fuel passage, it is necessary that the first valve is opened via the first opening between the first valve and the outside, and the second valve is opened via the second opening between the second valve and the outside.

Due to the above-mentioned configuration, the invention defined by claim 5 of the present application exhibits an effect that "the fuel in the fuel storage container 2 cannot be taken out unless the two valves 3 and 50 are opened simultaneously. Thus, the leakage of the stored fuel caused by carelessness can be prevented", as described in the paragraph [0085] of the specification.

In the fuel cartridge shown in FIG. 2 of Document 1, by inserting one tube B from one common opening and piercing the partition walls H and J in this order with the tube B, the partition walls H and J can be opened simultaneously. Thus, Document 1 does not describe the above-mentioned configuration recited in claim 5 of the present application. Furthermore, according to the invention of Document 1, the above-mentioned effect of the invention defined by claim 5 of the present application cannot be obtained.

Thus, the invention defined by claim 5 of the present application has novelty and inventiveness over Document 1.

Accordingly, we believe that the invention defined by claim 6 dependent upon claim 5 also has novelty and inventiveness over Document 1.

(4) Regarding claim 8

The fuel cell of the invention defined by claim 8 of the present application has an insertion port in which a fuel cartridge having at least a first valve and a second valve provided on a fuel passage is inserted. Then, "the insertion port includes a first driving portion and a second driving portion for opening the first and second valves simultaneously".

Due to such a configuration, the invention defined by claim 8 of the present application exhibits an effect that "the fuel in the fuel storage

container 2 cannot be taken out unless the two valves 3 and 50 are opened simultaneously. Thus, the leakage of the stored fuel caused by carelessness can be prevented", as described in the paragraph [0085] of the specification.

In the fuel cell shown in FIG. 1 of Document 1, one tube B simultaneously opens the partition walls H and J provided in the fuel cartridge L. Thus, Document 1 does not describe the above-mentioned configuration recited in claim 8 of the present application. Furthermore, according to the subject matter of Document 1, the above-mentioned effect of the invention defined by claim 8 of the present application cannot be obtained.

Thus, we believe that the invention defined by claim 8 of the present application has novelty and inventiveness over Document 1.